Availability of gas reserves in Bihar

†1563. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Bihar has expressed the possibility of petroleum products and natural gas reserves in the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State Government has inked an agreement with a foreign company for exploration of petroleum products and natural gas in the identified places of the State to give the said possibility a concrete shape, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Broadly, the geo-tectonic units in Bihar comprise of sedimentary depressions within Ganga Basin to the west and Purnia basin to the east of Monghyr-Saharsa ridge.

(b) and (c) Government of India has awarded and contracted one exploration block namely GV-ONN-2002/1 to M/s Cairn Energy, U.K. on the basis of competitive bidding in the Fourth Round of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) on 06.02.2004. The block is spread over an area of 15,500 sq.km and falls in the districts of Darbhanga Samastipur, Munger, Begusarai, Patna, Khagaria, Saharasa, Bhagalpur and Supaul. Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) for the block has been granted by the State Government of Bihar Exploratory work by the operator has been initiated.

Asian Gas Grid

1564. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of Asian Gas Grid;

(b) if so, the details including the countries associated with it and the pipeline that would cover India as a part of the proposal; and

(c) the present status of the proposal and the envisaged period of completion of the above project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) The idea of an "Asian Gas Grid" linking the North and Central Asian and Gulf Natural Gas producing

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.